

Insert new claims 11-24 as follows:

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11. (New) The apparatus of claim 6, further comprising a guide extending around the object, the feed member being located upstream of the guide.

12. (New) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the guide comprises a bar having an open position and a closed position.

13. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the feed member is arranged with the guide so that the bar is in the open position during wire stretching and in the closed position during wire feeding.

14. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the bar has grooves for said wire.

15. (New) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the feed wheel is rotatable in a first direction to feed said wire and rotatable in a second direction to stretch said wire.

16. (New) A method of binding an object, comprising:

a) feeding a predetermined amount of wire to the object, the feeding being performed by a feed member;

b) measuring the amount of the wire as the wire is fed, the measuring being performed in a measuring means separate from the feed member;

c) stretching the wire and disposing the wire on the object; and

d) forming a knot in the wire so as to bind the object.

17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of feeding the wire includes feeding the wire until an end of the wire arrives in a predetermined position.

18. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of feeding comprises turning the feed member in a first direction.

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19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of stretching includes retaining an end of the wire while turning the feed member in a second, reverse direction.

20. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the step of disposing the wire on the object comprises turning the feed member in the reverse direction until the speed of the wire is zero.

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21. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of disposing the wire includes measuring the amount of the wire as the feed member is turned in the reverse direction.

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22. (New) The method of claim 6, wherein the wire is fed into a guide bar when the guide bar is in a closed position.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein the step of stretching comprises stretching the wire while the guide bar is in an open position.

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24. (New) The method of claim 6, further comprising, after the step of forming a knot, cutting the wire and drawing the wire back to a predetermined position.

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MARKED-UP COPY OF AMENDED CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 6 as follows:

6. (Amended) Apparatus for binding wire around an object, comprising:

a feed member for feeding said wire, said feed member including a driven feed wheel for feeding and stretching said wire, said feed wheel being arranged upstream of the object to be bound, and

separate measuring means for continuously measuring the length of said wire fed by said feeding member whereby said measuring means does not feed said wire.